



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



132nd SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Washington, D.C., USA, 23-27 June 2003

Provisional Agenda Item 4.4

CE132/12, Rev. 1 (Eng.)
30 May 2003
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

REPORT ON THE 13th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE

1. The 13th Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial Level, on Health and Agriculture (RIMSA 13) was held at the Headquarters of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in Washington, D.C., from 24 to 25 April 2003. It was convened by the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (PASB), in compliance with Resolution CD17.R19, adopted by the 17th Directing Council of PAHO, and Resolution RIMSA12.R1, adopted by the 12th Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial Level, on Health and Agriculture held in São Paulo, Brazil, from 2 to 4 May 2001.

2. Dr. Roberto Rodrigues, Minister of State of Agriculture, Livestock, and Food Supply of Brazil and President of RIMSA 12, declared RIMSA 13 officially open and presided over the inaugural session. Subsequently, Dr. Lester Crawford, Deputy Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration of the United States of America welcomed the delegates and participants on behalf of the host country. In his remarks, Dr. Crawford conveyed the gratitude of his country for the opportunity to participate in this important and unique forum. Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, Director of the PASB, gave welcoming remarks on behalf of the Organization. She explained that the RIMSA meeting was established more than 30 years ago as a regional technical and political forum in which policy and strategies for intersectoral coordination between health and agriculture—"one of the central strategies of the Declaration of Alma-Ata on primary health care"—are discussed. Dr. Roses underlined the fundamental roles played by agriculture and health in fostering public health, food security, and rural development. She also stressed the achievements made by PAHO and its Member States in the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease, the sustained elimination of human rabies and cholera, and the successful efforts to keep the Americas free of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). She concluded with a call to enhance the synergism of the work of PAHO and its Member States.

3. Dr. Ann Veneman, Secretary of Agriculture of the United States delivered the keynote address, entitled “Towards the Harmonization of Food Safety and Trade in the Americas.” She stressed the vital role of intersectoral coordination between health and agriculture to achieve a safe food supply and the harmonization of science-based regulations, norms, and standards to facilitate regional and global trade.

4. Dr. Jorge Batlle, President of the Republic of Uruguay, addressed the assembly. He emphasized the strategic importance of achieving food security and safety for all. He stressed that the continent is one and made a plea to all governments to be responsible in this task. He finalized his speech with a wake-up call to make quick and safe progress toward consolidating the regional integration initiative with a continental vision.

5. The following officers of the meeting were elected unanimously: President: Dr. Jaime Campos Quiroga, Minister of Agriculture, Chile; Vice Presidents: Dr. María de Lourdes Urbaneja, Minister of Health and Social Development, Venezuela; and Dr. Ismael Cal, Minister of State - Agriculture and Fisheries, Belize; Rapporteur: Dr. Robin Woo, Senior Policy Analyst, Food and Drug Administration, United States. Dr. Mirta Roses, Director of PASB, acted as secretary ex officio, and Dr. Albino Belotto, Chief, Veterinary Public Health Unit, as Technical Secretary.

6. The Agenda and Program of Sessions were approved without modification.

7. A total of 198 persons attended RIMSA 13. Delegates from 33 Member States participated, among them 28 ministers of health and 31 ministers of agriculture or their representatives. Officers from other technical cooperation, finance, and private sectors participated as observers—among the latter, associations of livestock producers and consumers, the food industry, nongovernmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations, WHO Collaborating Centers, and universities. Observers from the Governments of Australia, British Virgin Islands, Malaysia, Philippines, South Africa, and Spain also attended.

8. At RIMSA 13, delegates evaluated the progress of the Hemispheric Program for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease and the Regional Plan on Food Safety and their importance for public health and socioeconomic development. A report of the Program on Veterinary Public Health in compliance with the Strategic and Programmatic Orientations of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, 1999-2002; the Report on the 9th Meeting of the Hemispheric Committee for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COHEFA 9); the Proposed Action Plan for the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA), 2004-2005; the Report of the 3rd Meeting of the Pan American Commission for Food Safety (COPAIA); and the Proposed Action Plan for the Pan American Institute for Food Protection and Zoonoses (INPPAZ), 2004-2005, were discussed and approved. Regarding the plan of action presented by INPPAZ, the

delegation of the United States stressed the importance and need to include expected results and outcomes that are clear and measurable.

9. The theme of RIMSA 13 was “Food Safety: From Production to Consumption.” The subject was presented and discussed in two panels. In panel 1, subregional country experiences were presented. The topics were: Fresh Produce, by Mr. Rodolfo Coto Pacheco (Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Costa Rica); the Spanish Food Agency, by Mrs. Ana María Pastor (Minister of Health and Consumer Protection, Spain); Caribbean Food Safety Initiative, by Mr. Herbert Sabaroche (Minister of Health and Social Security, Dominica); Fisheries and Seafood Industry, by Mr. Rafael Flores (Vice Minister of Agriculture, Panama); and Livestock and Livestock Products, by Dr. Bernardo Cané (President of SENASA, Argentina). The delegates expressed their satisfaction with the panel presentations, and stressed that RIMSA serves as a model forum for a holistic approach to developing food safety programs involving not only agriculture and health but also all the concerned social actors.

10. Panel 2 focused on International Cooperation on Food Safety and Security—Global Perspective. Presentations were made on the following topics: Food Security: Challenges and Opportunities Facing Production of Livestock and Livestock Products, by Dr. Samuel Jutzi (Director, Animal Health and Production of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations); Food Safety and Trade: Regulations and Transparency in a Global Market Economy, by Mr. Michael Roberts (World Trade Organization); Expanding Mandate of the International Office of Epizootics, by Dr. Bernard Vallat (Director General of the World Organization for Animal Health, (OIE)); and Report of the Evaluation of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, by Mr. Thomas Billy (Chairman of the Joint FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission). It was noted that increasing livestock densities in humid and warm ecologies contribute to higher frequency and exposure to animal disease agents, both endemic and epidemic, including those of zoonotic nature. The rights of governments to give priority to public health while ensuring that unjustified barriers to trade are not imposed was stressed. The need for international organizations to provide official reports to governments, based on duly documented and credible information on the international animal health situation, was addressed. The delegates underscored the need for Member States to develop scientifically sound international regulations, norms, and standards for consumer health protection and fair food trade practices.

11. Panel 3 discussed Agriculture, Health, and Rural Development. Presentations were made on the following topics: Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)/PAHO Strategic Alliance, by Mr. Chelston Braithwaite (Director General, IICA); Public and Private Goods in a Global Market, by Ms. Mari Stull (President, Grocery Manufacturers of America); Participation and Civic Engagement in Poverty Reduction Strategy, by Mr. Mario Berríos (Trade Specialist from the Integration,

Trade, and Hemispheric Issues Division of the Inter-American Development Bank); and Human Development and Prosperity in Rural Communities, by Dr. Mirta Roses Periago (Director, PASB). The delegates emphasized that food safety will continue to play a major role in public health and the agri-food trade, and international specialized organizations are expected to maintain their roles as key components in the global food regulatory framework. It was stressed that the principal areas for joint activities between agriculture and health to generate the necessary synergy for human sustainable development and the prosperity of rural communities are: food security, food safety, animal health, and the prevention/control and elimination of zoonoses. The model of the healthy and productive municipalities initiative, allied with primary health care strategy, is an excellent mechanism to achieve these goals. The delegates recognized that sustainable programs are complex and their success depends on an integrated approach, involving agriculture, health, and the other social sectors.

12. Three special presentations were delivered and discussed. Dr. Lester Crawford (Deputy Commissioner, United States Food and Drug Administration) made a presentation on Bioterrorism—The Threat in the Western Hemisphere. He stressed the interdependence of countries and the importance of working together to prevent deliberate contamination of food by chemical, biological, or nuclear agents, which can occur at any vulnerable point along the food chain, from farm to table. Dr. Matias de Nicola, Director, National Institute of Food, Argentina (INAL), presented the Report of the Regional Meeting on Genetically Modified Food. Several delegates expressed satisfaction with the presentation on this Report, which provided clarity regarding the technical and ethical aspects, public perception, norms, and future of genetically modified food, especially with respect to their benefits and risks to public health. Finally, Dr. Kaare Norum (Chair of the WHO Reference Group for the Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity, and Health) presented the Report of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation on Diet, Nutrition, and the Prevention of Chronic Diseases. Dr. Norum indicated that the report stressed the need to make a strong political decision to develop multisectoral actions to ensure adequate agricultural and livestock production to meet the needs of a healthy diet, and community education to increase physical activity.

13. RIMSA 13 adopted 10 resolutions.

14. In closing, the assembly was addressed by Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, Director of the PASB, and Dr. Jaime Campos Quiroga, President of RIMSA 13, who declared the meeting closed.

15. The Members of the Executive Committee are invited to analyze the attached report and formulate comments and suggestions.

Annex



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



13th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE

Washington, D.C., 24–25 April 2003

CE132/12, Rev. 1 (Eng.)
Annex

RIMSA13/FR, Rev. 1 (Eng.)
30 May 2003
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

FINAL REPORT

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Officers	3
Participants	3
Agenda and Program of Sessions	4
Sessions	4
Opening of the Session	4
First Session.....	5
Second Session	7
Third Session	7
Fourth Session	8
Closing of the Session	9
Resolutions	9
RIMSA13.R1 Veterinary Public Health—Integration of Technical Cooperation	10
RIMSA13.R2 3rd Meeting of the Pan American Commission for Food Safety (COPAIA 3).....	11
RIMSA13.R3 9th Meeting of Directors of National Rabies Control Programs in Latin America (REDIPRA 9)	11
RIMSA13.R4 Contribution of the Ministries of Agriculture and Health.....	13
RIMSA13.R5 9th Meeting of the Hemispheric Committee for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COHEFA 9)	14
RIMSA13.R6 Food Safety—From Production to Consumption	14
RIMSA13.R7 Report on Bioterrorism—the Threat in the Western Hemisphere	15
RIMSA13.R8 Participation of the Countries in the <i>Codex Alimentarius</i>	16
RIMSA13.R9 Agriculture, Health, and Rural Development	17
RIMSA13.R10 Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau.....	18

1. The 13th Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial Level, on Health and Agriculture (RIMSA 13) was held at the Headquarters of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in Washington, D.C., from 24 to 25 April 2003. It was convened by the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (PASB), in compliance with Resolution CD17.R19, adopted by the 17th Directing Council of PAHO, and Resolution RIMSA12.R1, adopted by the 12th Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial Level, on Health and Agriculture held in São Paulo, Brazil, from 2 to 4 May 2001.

Officers

2. The following officers of the Meeting were elected unanimously:

President: Chile Dr. Jaime Campos Quiroga, Minister of Agriculture

Vice Presidents: Venezuela Dr. Maria de Lourdes Urbaneja, Ministra de Salud y Desarrollo Social

Belize Hon. Ismael Cal, Minister of State – Agriculture and Fisheries

Rapporteur: USA Dr. Robin Woo, Food and Drug Administration

3. Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, Director of PASB, served as Secretary ex officio of RIMSA 13, and Dr. Albino Belotto, Chief, Veterinary Public Health Unit, PASB, as Technical Secretary.

Participants

Member States

4. The following Member States were represented at the Meeting: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

Observer States

5. Present were representatives of the Government of Spain.

Observers

6. The following countries and territories were in attendance as observers: the Governments of Australia, British Virgin Islands, Malaysia, Philippines, and South Africa. The United Nations and specialized agencies represented were: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLA), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Joint FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission, World Health Organization (WHO), and World Trade Organization (WTO). The intergovernmental organizations represented were: Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA), International Office of Epizootics (OIE), Organization of American States (OAS), and Regional International Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA).

Agenda and Program of Sessions

7. The Agenda and Program of Sessions (Documents RIMSA13/1 and RIMSA13/WP/1) were approved without modification.

Sessions

8. An inaugural session and four plenary sessions were held.

Opening of the Session

9. Dr. Roberto Rodrigues, Ministro de Estado da Agricultura, da Pecuaria e do Abastecimento of Brazil, President of RIMSA 12, declared the Meeting officially open and presided in the inaugural session. On behalf of the Host Country, Dr. Lester Crawford, Deputy Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration of the United States, welcomed the delegates and participants to RIMSA13. Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, gave the welcoming remarks on behalf of PAHO. She highlighted that the RIMSA meeting was established more than 30 years ago, which puts into real action the strategy of intersectoral coordination between health and agriculture, one of the central strategies of the Declaration of Alma-Ata on primary health care. Dr. Roses pointed out the fundamental roles played by agriculture and health in fostering rural development and food security, and stressed the achievements made in the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease, the sustained elimination of human rabies and

cholera, and the successful efforts to keep the Americas free of BSE. She reiterated her call for synergism in the work of PAHO and its Member States.

10. The Honorable Ann Veneman, Secretary of Agriculture of the United States of America delivered the keynote address, entitled “Towards the harmonization of food safety and trade in the Americas”. She stressed the vital role of intersectoral coordination between health and agriculture to achieve a safe food supply and the harmonization of science-based regulations, norms and standards to facilitate regional and global trade. Secretary Veneman manifested the desire of the United States to provide assistance to the countries of the Region. She encouraged the delegates to continue working together to ensure a safe food supply and in forging strategic alliances with other technical and funding institutions.

11. His Excellency Dr. Jorge Batlle, President of the Republic of Uruguay, addressed the assembly. Dr. Batlle presented a synthesis of the history of the agriculture and livestock sectors in Uruguay, indicating their vital role for the economy and development of his country. He illustrated this assertion by saying that 80% of the GNP of Uruguay is derived from the exportation of products of these sectors. He referred to the negative economic impact caused by the reintroduction of foot and mouth disease in Uruguay in 2001, and praised the technical cooperation provided by the Pan American Foot and Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA) in helping his country to regain the status of free of FMD with vaccination. He also indicated the importance of having an independent scientific body assess the epidemiological status of FMD on a continuous basis. Then he emphasized the strategic importance of achieving food security and safety for all. He stressed that the continent is one and made a call to all governments to take the responsibility in this task. Dr. Batlle indicated that he is convinced that the scientific and technical capacity to achieve this goal exists. He then made a call to prevent the use of non-tariff barriers and other forms of barriers such as subsidies. He concluded his speech by reemphasizing that the present moment is a wake up call to make quick and safe progress toward consolidating the regional integration initiative with a continental vision. This is the mission we have before us, and Uruguay is ready to walk this path.

First Session

12. During the first session, Dr. Albino Belotto (Chief, Veterinary Public Health Unit, PASB) aired a new video on “Health and agriculture contributions to a better life in the Americas: rebuilding alliances for improving public health”, which defined the very nature of the challenges faced by the participants of RIMSA13, and presented the report of the Program on Veterinary Public Health on compliance with the Strategic and Programmatic Orientations of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, 1999-2002 (Document RIMSA13/3). He stressed that the association between animal and human health is recognized by PAHO and its Member States. This is expressed in the protection of public

health against zoonoses and in food safety, as well as the human dependence on animals for food and companionship. To act effectively in this area, the integration of agriculture and health is fundamental. Dr. Belotto referred to integrated veterinary public health activities with the specialized Centers—Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA) and Pan American Institute on Food Protection and Zoonoses (INPPAZ)—to achieve the goals of PAHO in relation to foot-and-mouth disease, zoonoses and food safety. He referred to the report of the 9th Meeting of Directors of National Rabies Control Programs in Latin America (document RIMSA13/INF/2), stressed the commitment to eliminate dog-transmitted human rabies and to the continued reduction of human cases, which have been reduced by 75% in the last 10 years and eradicated from practically all major cities in Latin America.

13. Also during this session, Dr. Eduardo Correa, Director of PANAFTOSA, described the proposed plan of action for the Center during 2004-2005 (Document RIMSA13/4), and presented the report of the 9th Meeting of the Hemispheric Committee for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COHEFA 9) (Document RIMSA13/21) and the resolutions adopted by that Committee to eliminate foot-and-mouth disease by 2009. He reported on the 29th and 30th meetings of the South American Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COSALFA), the epidemiological situation of foot-and-mouth disease in the countries, 2001-2002, and presented a detailed progress report on the Plan of Action of the Hemispheric Program for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (PHEFA). Dr. Correa noted that the plans of action of the sub-regional projects in the Southern Cone and Andean Region are about to be completed, while those of the Amazon and non-Amazon Brazil subregions are about to be initiated. He pointed out the need to strengthen the prevention programs in the foot-and-mouth disease-free subregions of North America, Caribbean, and Central America.

14. This was followed by the presentation of Dr. Claudio Almeida, Director of INPPAZ, outlining the plan of action of the Center for 2004-2005 (Document RIMSA13/5). He also presented the report of the 3rd Meeting of the Pan American Commission on Food Safety (COPAIA) (Document RIMSA13/22) and the conclusions and recommendations it adopted to improve institutional modernization, surveillance capacity, risk assessment, communication and education, and cooperation on food safety among countries. The delegates stressed the importance of identifying the necessary mechanisms to mobilize funds compatible with the plans of action, and for INPPAZ to report on measurable results and outcomes.

15. The delegates adopted Resolution RIMSA13.1 recommending the approval of the report and technical cooperation on veterinary public health and its two specialized Centers, and their plans of action for 2004-2005. Resolutions RIMSA13.R2, RIMSA13.4 and RIMSA13.5 were also adopted by the assembly outlining the conclusions and recommendations of REDIPRA 9, COHEFA 9, and COPAIA 3, respectively.

Second Session

16. The first part of the second session was devoted to a panel on food safety—from production to consumption. Presentations were made on the following topics: Fresh Produce, by Mr. Rodolfo Coto Pacheco (Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Costa Rica); Spanish Food Agency, by Mrs. Ana Maria Pastor (Minister of Health and Consumer Protection, Spain); Caribbean Food Safety Initiative, by the Honorable Herbert Sabaroché (Minister of Health and Social Security, Dominica); Fisheries and Seafood Industry, by Mr. Rafael Flores (Vice-Minister of Agriculture, Panama); and Livestock and Livestock Products, by Dr. Bernardo Cané (President of the National Food and Agriculture Safety and Quality Service [SENASA], Argentina) (Documents RIMSA13/6-9). The delegates expressed their satisfaction on the panel presentations, and that the RIMSA serves as a model forum for a holistic approach to developing food safety programs involving not only agriculture and health but also all the social actors involved.

17. The need to evaluate and strengthen national policies and strategies on food safety in accordance to the approved plan, and to give priority to food protection as an essential function for agriculture and health were stressed by the delegates. They pointed out the necessity to analyze the budget for the PAHO program of technical cooperation in veterinary public health, covering food protection, foot-and-mouth disease and zoonoses, and to propose alternative mechanisms for the consideration of the ministers of health and agriculture to guarantee the availability of funds for the implementation of the recommendations made by RIMSA.

18. The outcome of the discussions of this panel is reflected in Resolutions RIMSA13.R3 and RIMSA13.R6.

19. Next, Dr. Kaare Norum (Chair of the WHO Reference Group to the Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity, and Health) presented the Report of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation on Diet, Nutrition and the Prevention of Chronic Diseases (Document RIMSA 13/20). The report stressed the need to take a strong political decision to develop multisectoral actions to ensure an adequate agricultural and livestock production to meet the needs of a healthy diet, and community education to increase physical activity.

Third Session

20. The third session began with the special presentation on bioterrorism—the threat in the Western Hemisphere by Dr. Lester Crawford (Deputy Commissioner, United States Food and Drug Administration), which stressed the interdependence of countries and the importance of working together to prevent deliberate contamination of food by

chemical, biological or nuclear agents, which can occur at any vulnerable point along the food chain, from farm to table.

21. The delegates adopted Resolution RIMSA13.R7 on this item.

22. This was followed by the panel on international cooperation on food safety and security—global perspective. Presentations were made on the following topics: Food Security: Challenges and Opportunities Facing Production of Livestock and Livestock Products, by Dr. Samuel Jutzi (Director, Animal Health and Production of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations); Food Safety and Trade: Regulations and Transparency in a Global Market Economy, by Mr. Michael Roberts (Economic Affairs Officer, Agriculture and Commodities Division, World Trade Organization); Expanding Mandate of the International Office of Epizootics, by Dr. Bernard Vallat (Director General of the World Animal Health Organization (OIE)); and Report of the Evaluation of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, by Mr. Thomas Billy (Chairman of the Joint FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission) (Documents RIMSA13/11-14).

23. It was noted that increasing livestock densities in humid and warm ecologies contribute to higher frequency and exposure to animal disease agents, both endemic and epidemic, including those of zoonotic nature. The rights of governments to give priority to public health, while ensuring that unjustified barriers to trade are not imposed was stressed. The need for international organizations to provide official reports to governments, based on duly documented and credible information on international animal health situation, was addressed. The delegates underscored the necessity for Member States to develop scientifically sound international standards and norms for consumer health protection and fair food trade practices.

24. The outcome of the discussion of this item is reflected in Resolution RIMSA13.8.

25. The last topic considered during this session was the presentation of the Report of the Regional Meeting on Genetically Modified Foods (Document RIMSA13/10), by Dr. Matías de Nicola (Director, National Institute of Food, Argentina). Various delegates expressed satisfaction for the presentation of this timely topic which provided clarity on the technical, ethical, public perception, norms and the future of genetically modified foods, especially with respect to their benefits and risks to public health.

Fourth Session

26. The first part of the fourth session was the panel on agriculture, health and rural development. Presentations were made on the following topics: IICA/PAHO Strategic Alliance, by Mr. Chelston Braithwaite (Director General, Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture); Public and Private Goods in a Global Market, by Ms. Mari

Stull (President, Grocery Manufacturers of America); Participation and Civic Engagement in Poverty Reduction Strategy, by Mr. Mario Berrios (Trade Specialist, Trade and Integration Department, Inter-American Development Bank); and Human Development and Prosperity in Rural Communities, by Dr. Mirta Roses Periago (Director, Pan American Sanitary Bureau) (Documents RIMSA13/15-19). The panel referred to a network that would facilitate access to information, technology, and best practices for all countries in the Americas in support for hemispheric agricultural trade integration. It addressed health and nutrition as critical priorities for the food and beverage industries. That food safety will continue to play a major role in agri-food trade in the future and international specialized organizations are expected to keep their roles as key components in the global food regulatory framework.

27. It was stressed that the principal areas for joint activities between agriculture and health to generate the necessary synergy for human development and the prosperity of rural communities are: food security, animal health and zoonoses, food safety, and sustainable local development. That the model of healthy and productive municipalities initiative, allied with primary health care strategy, is a mechanism to achieve these goals. The delegates recognized that sustainable programs are complex and their success depends on an integrated approach involving agriculture, health and the other social sectors.

28. The meeting adopted resolution RIMSA13.9 in relation to this item.

29. The assembly also overwhelmingly supported the motion put forward by the delegation of Brazil, by adopting Resolution RIMSA13.10 congratulating Dr. Mirta Roses Periago on her historic election as the first woman Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau in its 100 year history.

Closing of the Session

30. In closing, the assembly was addressed by Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, and the President of RIMSA 13, Dr. Jaime Campos Quiroga, who declared the meeting closed.

Resolutions

31. RIMSA 13 adopted the following 10 resolutions:

RIMSA13.R1 Veterinary Public Health—Integration of Technical Cooperation

THE 13th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE,

Having analyzed the *Report of the Program on Veterinary Public Health on Compliance with the Strategic and Programmatic Orientations of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, 1999-2002* (Document RIMSA13/3);

Having seen the reports on the *Proposed Plan of Action for the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA), 2004-2005* (Document RIMSA13/4) and the *Proposed Plan of Action for the Pan American Institute for Food Protection and Zoonoses (INPPAZ), 2004-2005* (Document RIMSA13/5);

Considering that for over 50 years, the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (PASB) has been providing integrated technical cooperation in veterinary public health;

Taking into account Resolution CSP18.33 of the XVIII Pan American Sanitary Conference, which considered the guidelines for the Pan American Centers and concluded that they are both an integral part and a means for achieving the objectives of PASB cooperation programs; and

Bearing in mind the achievements of the countries of the Region in the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease, the control of the principal zoonoses, and food safety,

RESOLVES:

1. To urge the Member States to continue strengthening the mechanisms for intersectoral coordination between health and agriculture in order to formulate joint and complementary plans and activities with private-sector participation.
2. To recommend that the Director approve the Plans of Action for the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA) and the Pan American Institute for Food Protection and Zoonoses (INPPAZ) for 2004-2005, and identify mechanisms for allocating resources and measuring outcome consistent with the technical cooperation plans in veterinary public health, which is concerned with zoonoses, foot-and-mouth disease, and food safety including organizing laboratory networks for improved diagnostics and surveillance.
3. To thank the Governments of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Argentine Republic for their continuing support for the development and operation of

PANAFTOSA and INPPAZ, respectively, and to request that they maintain this important support.

(Third session, 25 April 2003)

**RIMSA13.R2 3rd Meeting of the Pan American Commission for Food Safety
(COPAIA 3)**

***THE 13th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON
HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE,***

Having studied the Report of the 3rd Meeting of the Pan American Commission for Food Safety (COPAIA 3) (Document RIMSA13/22);

Considering that PAHO, through its Veterinary Public Health Unit and specialized Centers, particularly INPPAZ, has been working with the Member States to construct a new vision and work paradigm to improve food safety, based on an integrated approach covering all the links in the food production chain; and

Bearing in mind that COPAIA 2 approved the terms of reference and framework for this effort and adopted the Strategic Plan for Food Protection, endorsed by the Governing Bodies of PAHO,

RESOLVES:

1. To endorse the conclusions and recommendations of COPAIA 3.
2. To request that PAHO promote technical cooperation among countries to improve and strengthen food safety and food security programs.

(Third session, 25 April 2003)

**RIMSA13.R3 9th Meeting of Directors of National Rabies Control Programs in
Latin America (REDIPRA 9)**

***THE 13th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON
HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE,***

Taking into account document RIMSA13/INF/2 *Report on the 9th Meeting of Directors of National Rabies Control Programs in Latin America (REDIPRA 9)*, which

describes progress toward the elimination of human rabies transmitted by dogs in the Region and recommends strategies to the Member States and the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (PASB) for consolidating and maintaining the favorable situation achieved;

Mindful that the risk of canine rabies still persists in some countries, as does the risk of its reemergence in countries or areas that have managed to eliminate it; and

Considering the need to heighten rabies surveillance and strengthen epidemiological characterization in domestic animals and wildlife, as well as the need to improve care for people exposed to the risk of rabies and promote the use of new technologies for rabies diagnosis,

RESOLVES:

1. To urge the Member States to:
 - (a) reaffirm the political will and take the necessary steps recommended by REPIDRA 9 to strengthen technical aspects of rabies control measures both in countries that continue to report human rabies cases and in those in which there has been a deterioration in the indicators of the progress made by the national rabies control programs;
 - (b) promote the participation of local governments and community organizations, in coordination with the national rabies control programs, addressing the situation of wildlife in rabies prevention and control activities;
 - (c) promote technological changes in the production of rabies vaccines, shifting from their manufacture in neural tissue to manufacture in cell culture.
2. To request the Director to review and strengthen PASB technical cooperation with the Member States to consolidate the elimination of human rabies transmitted by dogs, while at the same time promoting the surveillance and control of rabies in wildlife.

(Fourth session, 25 April 2003)

RIMSA13.R4 *Contribution of the Ministries of Agriculture and Health*

THE 13th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE,

Considering Resolution CD17.19 of the Directing Council of PAHO, which authorizes the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau to convene a periodic meeting of the ministers of agriculture, beginning in 1968, to review the technical cooperation program in veterinary public health and its specialized Centers, and to analyze matters of mutual interest;

Acknowledging the support and financing agreements for the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center contained in the report of the Commission presided by His Excellency, the Vice President of Peru, ratified by the XVIII Pan American Sanitary Conference; and

Bearing in mind Resolutions CD27.R18 and CD28.R32 of the Directing Council of PAHO which strongly emphasize to all the Member States, through their ministries of agriculture, the desirability of making extraordinary contributions to meet current technical cooperation needs in animal and human health, pursuant to specific agreements with PAHO,

RESOLVES:

To request the Director to:

1. analyze the current situation with respect to the availability of financial resources for PAHO's technical cooperation program in veterinary public health, which addresses matters related to foot-and-mouth disease, zoonoses, and food safety.
2. prepare a proposal for the consideration of the ministries of agriculture and health of the Member States and the Associate Member on alternative financing mechanisms to guarantee compliance with the RIMSA mandates.

(Fourth session, 25 April 2003)

***RIMSA13.R5 9th Meeting of the Hemispheric Committee for the Eradication
of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COHEFA 9)***

***THE 13th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON
HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE,***

Having studied the Report on the 9th Meeting of the Hemispheric Committee for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COHEFA 9) (Document RIMSA13/21); and

Bearing in mind the need to move forward with the instrumentation of the Plan of Action of the Hemispheric Program for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (PHEFA), 2003-2009, in particular and guaranteeing more rapid achievement of the established goals,

RESOLVES:

1. To endorse the conclusions and recommendations of COHEFA 9.
2. To urge the members of COHEFA, from both the public and the private sectors, to identify alternative mechanisms to increase financing for the activities proposed in the resolutions adopted.

(Fourth session, 25 April 2003)

RIMSA13.R6 Food Safety—From Production to Consumption

***THE 13th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON
HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE,***

Taking into account the topics addressed by the panels: *Food Safety—From Production to Consumption* (Documents RIMSA13/6, RIMSA13/7, RIMSA13/8, and RIMSA13/9) and *International Cooperation on Food Safety and Security—Global Perspective* (Documents RIMSA13/11, RIMSA13/12, RIMSA13/13, and RIMSA13/14);

Considering the *Report of the Regional Meeting on Genetically Modified Foods* (Documents RIMSA13/10 and RIMSA/INF/1);

Noting resolution WHA52.15 of the World Health Assembly, which approved the inclusion of food safety in the essential public health functions;

Taking into account resolution CD42.R3 of the Directing Council of PAHO, which adopted the Strategic Plan for Food Protection; and

Aware of the challenges that the governments of the Member States must overcome to achieve food security and guarantee food safety, and of the need to involve all agents that interact at every link in the food production chain,

RESOLVES:

1. To urge the Member States to:
 - (a) evaluate and strengthen their policies and strategies in food safety, in keeping with the Strategic Plan for Food Protection adopted;
 - (b) prioritize food safety as essential for food security; and
 - (c) recognize the importance of food safety to national health, tourism, and international trade.
2. To request the Director to:
 - (a) mobilize the technical cooperation required for the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Food Protection;
 - (b) cooperate in the development of regional, subregional, and national food safety initiatives to protect public health, reduce foodborne diseases, and promote social and economic well-being in the Member States.

(Fourth session, 25 April 2003)

RIMSA13.R7 Report on Bioterrorism—the Threat in the Western Hemisphere

THE 13th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE,

Having read and discussed the *Report on Bioterrorism—the Threat in the Western Hemisphere* (Document RIMSA13/18);

Considering the comments of the delegates of Member States, their suggestions that Nations are interdependent, and the Region of the Americas must be united against the threat of bioterrorism; and

The efforts to prevent bioterrorism should not impede trade and commerce in food and agriculture,

RESOLVES:

To encourage all Member States, with the support of PAHO, to work together in developing preventive mechanisms to reduce the risks of bioterrorism related to food, public health and animal health, and to ensure that such preventive measures support the ideals of equity, justice and peace.

(Fourth session, 25 April 2003)

RIMSA13.R8 ***Participation of the Countries in the Codex Alimentarius***

THE 13th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE,

Having analyzed the topics of the panel *International Cooperation on Food Safety and Security—Global Perspective* (Documents RIMSA13/11, RIMSA13/12, RIMSA13/13, and RIMSA13/14), especially the *Report of the Evaluation of the Codex Alimentarius*;

Cognizant of the challenges that the governments of the Member States must overcome to participate actively in the work of the *Codex Alimentarius*, and of its importance for the application of sanitary and phytosanitary measures under the agreements of the World Trade Organization; and

Recognizing the importance of employing scientific norms and standards in country food legislation and regulations to strengthen food safety programs, protect consumer health, and ensure correct practices in the food trade,

RESOLVES:

1. To urge the Member States to:
 - (a) strengthen the Codex coordination mechanisms at the regional, national, and local level to promote active, coherent participation in the work of the *Codex Alimentarius*;
 - (b) promote the use of the *Codex Alimentarius* standards in legislation on food for local consumption and export, leading to harmonization for trade;

- (c) support the FAO/WHO Trust Fund initiative as an instrument to facilitate the participation of the countries of the Region in the *Codex Alimentarius*.
2. To request the Director to:
- (a) promote the countries' active participation in the work of the *Codex Alimentarius*;
 - (b) assist Member States to strengthen their capacity to implement the *Codex* standards, working with other international organizations;
 - (c) explore mechanisms with the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization for increased hemispheric collaboration on the *Codex Alimentarius* activities through existing regional forums with participation by relevant international organizations, such as the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE).

(Fourth session, 25 April 2003)

RIMSA13.R9 Agriculture, Health, and Rural Development

THE 13th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE,

Taking into account the panel Agriculture, Health, and Rural Development;

Having seen Documents RIMSA13/15 *PAHO-IICA Strategic Alliance*, RIMSA13/16 *Public and Private Goods in a World Market*, RIMSA13/17 *Participation and Civic Engagement in the Poverty Reduction Strategy*, and RIMSA13/19 *Human Development and Prosperity in Rural Communities*;

Bearing in mind the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations, especially the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, incorporation of the principles of sustainable development in the policies, and attention to the special needs of the least developed countries;

Aware that rural populations are still the poorest and most disadvantaged groups in terms of access to public services and to government development programs; and

Recognizing that RIMSA is the forum that operationalizes intersectoral action between health and agriculture to improve the living conditions of the peoples of the Americas,

RESOLVES:

1. To urge the Member States to collaborate with nongovernmental institutions and international organizations to promote strategic initiatives in agriculture, health, and rural development to eliminate hunger and reduce poverty.
2. To request the Director, through the mechanisms of RIMSA, to strengthen technical cooperation in veterinary public health in rural areas, in coordination with all the programs of the Organization and those of technical cooperation agencies.

(Fourth session, 25 April 2003)

RIMSA13.R10 Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau

THE 13th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE,

Taking into account the Resolution of the 26th Pan American Sanitary Conference (CSP26.R6) declaring Dr. Mirta Roses Periago the elected Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau for the five-year period beginning 1 February 2003; and

Considering that Dr. Roses Periago is the first woman to occupy the highest position in the Pan American Sanitary Bureau in the 100 years of its history,

RESOLVES:

1. To congratulate Dr. Mirta Roses Periago on her election as Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau and wish her every success in her administration to promote the health of the peoples of the Americas.
2. To affirm to the Director the wholehearted support of RIMSA, the highest policy forum that operationalizes intersectoral action between health and agriculture to contribute to the health and development of our peoples.

3. To request that during her term, the Director continue to guarantee integrated technical cooperation in veterinary public health, with the object of maximizing existing resources to solve problems of mutual interest in the agriculture and health sectors.

(Fourth session, 25 April 2003)

- - -